

50 kidnapped, 629 days Naomi Sha'anan stood up for the kidnapped every day, she will not get to see their release

Even at the height of the campaign with Iran, Shanan made sure to stand at the regular intersection in Beersheba with a sign in hand. Yesterday, after she was killed in a missile strike in the city, dozens of activists gathered in her memory to call for the release of the hostages, an issue to which she dedicated the last months of her life.

By Eden Solomon, June 26, 2025



Protest rally in memory of Naomi Shaanan in Be'er Sheva, yesterday. "She was a hardcore protest activist, on whom the activity is built," said Doron Cohen, who was among the activists who came to the rally. Photo: Eliyahu Hershkowitz

At a quiet intersection in central Be'er Sheva, dozens stood in silence yesterday (Wednesday). Not for a funeral, but for a farewell rally. Without funerals in a cemetery, but with tattered signs, a megaphone and the tears of an entire community. The last request of 73-year-old Naomi Sha'anan, who was killed the day before yesterday when a missile hit the military police headquarters in her home, was that there be no burial ceremony. Instead, a protest rally was held for the release of the hostages - the issue to which she devoted the last months of her life.

"Naomi would stand here even when we were all afraid," said one activist. "Even when the attack on Iran began, when almost no one came, she was here with her sign." She was not afraid of the missiles, and demonstrated until the last moment. Doron Cohen, among the activists who came to the rally, said that "she was a hardcore protest activist, on which the activity is built."



Naomi Sha'anani. Her last request was that there be no burial ceremony for her. Instead, a protest rally was held for the release of the kidnapped. Photo: Tanya Zion Waldex

When they heard that the missile had directly hit her house, activists began searching for her. Her close friends arrived at Soroka Hospital and the evacuation point, but they did not find her. At night, the news came: Naomi was the fourth victim. "It felt like October 7 all over again," said her friend Sarit Lizarovich. "She was a pillar of strength and a source of strength. She must have been embarrassed to see all the people who came for her."

Naomi's friends and colleagues in the struggle, whom many had known through the protests, read out the names of the 50 abductees in Gaza at the rally. Naomi's friend Maayan held a megaphone in a shaking hand: "I hope we see soon what she unfortunately did not get to see, that everyone returns home as soon as possible," she cried.



Protest rally in memory of Naomi Shaanan, yesterday. "She would stand here even when we were all afraid," said one activist. Photo: Eliyahu Hershkowitz

Naomi always took care of the equipment at the demonstrations she participated in. Yesterday, at the first rally without her, the activists were asked to bring signs from home. All the equipment and signs for the release of the hostages were in her destroyed car. Shaul Levy, grandfather of captivity survivor Naoma Levy, came to pay her last respects. "It's very difficult," he said. "There is a group of activists here who never missed a single rally, and Naomi was always by their side, with her pleasant expression, smile, and silence."

Just before the activists dispersed, they poured small glasses of whiskey – a gesture that only those closest to her knew. "That's how she would end the day," one of the activists smiled sadly. "A whiskey chaser and a discussion about Drucker, that was her ritual." Thus ended the rally, in the place where she chose to stand every day with the hope that all the hostages would return home. But Naomi would never see that again.

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Original in Hebrew here:

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